

**COMMISSION ON AGING  
MEETING MINUTES  
May 26, 2016**

<b>Members Present</b>	<b>Members Absent</b>
Charles Kauffman	Noureen Chochan
Judith Peres	Georgia Guenther
Richard Jourdenais	Monica Schaeffer
Miriam Kelty	Hileia Seeger
John Honig	Grace Whipple
Amoke Alakoye	Syed Yusuf
Judith Levy	
Mary Petrizzo	
Rudy Oswald	<b>Alumni members</b>
Paul Del Ponte	Marcia Pruzan
Jerry Morenoff	
Noelle Heyman	
Bonnie Klem	<b>Liaisons</b>
Revathi Vikram	Stephanie Moore, Housing Opportunities Commission
Barbara Mulitz	Sarah Gotbaum, Elder Women's Aging Alliance
Mort Faller	Alan Kaplan, Commission on Health
Karen Maricheau	Faisal Khan, Department of Transportation
Isabelle Schoenfeld	Jim Campbell, Commission on Veterans Affairs
Stephanie Edelstein	Phil Smakula, Department of Recreation
David Denton	Jim Resnick, Montgomery County Fire Rescue Services
Helen Abrahams	
Tamara Duell (By Phone)	
	<b>Guests</b>
	Paul Bessel
	<b>Staff</b>
	Odile Brunetto, Department of Health and Human Services
	Tremayne Jones, Department of Health and Human Services

Commission Chair Noelle Heyman opened the meeting at 9:30 am.

**Approval of Minutes**

The minutes from the April 28<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved.

**Treasurer's Report – Revathi Vikram**

The CoA account balance as of May 26, 2016 is \$1,952.30.

## **Introductions**

Current commissioners introduced themselves to new commissioners.

### **Chair's Report – Noelle Heyman**

- The Vital Living Network (VLN) is expanding its speakers panel, and will be inviting other agencies and groups to their meetings. VLN is also partnering with other organizations in Montgomery County to create a walking group.
- The City of Gaithersburg held its 8th Annual Aging Expo on May 2, 2016 at Bohrer Park. The Expo was very successful, and featured a variety of speakers covering an array of topics, as well as fitness demonstrations and other interactive activities.
- The Senior IT Expo at Holiday Park was well attended and a huge success. Many seniors attended to learn how to work with computers and smartphones.
- Noelle was a guest on Seniors Today, discussing the work of the Commission.
- Sarah Gotbaum, the CoA liaison from the Elder Women's Aging Alliance, received the 2016 Neal Potter Path of Achievement Award. The award honors two recipients 60 years of age or better whose accomplishments and lifelong commitment to volunteer service make them outstanding role models for young and old alike. Sarah has devoted her life to working professionally and as a volunteer on behalf of women, equality, and aging issues. Among her accomplishments, Sarah was the founder of the Montgomery County chapter of the Older Women's League, where she advocated for policies and programs to improve the lives of seniors. In her 90's, she continues to volunteer to better the lives of those around her.
- Strategic Planning Workgroup – Judy Levy will discuss later in the meeting.
- CoA advocacy on the county budget was very successful, and in some priority areas, resulted in more funding than we requested.

### **Area Agency on Aging Director's Report – Dr. Odile Brunetto**

Odile reported first on items affecting older Montgomery County residents in the FY17 County Executive's Budget. Highlights include:

- Reduction in the Call N Ride eligibility age from 67 to 65.
- \$200,000 increase in funding for contractual staff for AERS (Adult Evaluation and Review Services, which must be conducted by a licensed registered nurse or social worker).
- \$18,000 for communications, including for an insert in the Senior Beacon.
- \$100,000 increase in Adult Day Care Subsidies.
- Funding for a Part-Time Senior Fellow (11 hours/week) to help implement Age Friendly Montgomery County.
- \$30,000 increase in Meals on Wheels funding.

The County Council also added the following items to the budget:

- \$70,722 for a full-time social worker to help reduce the waitlist for the SSTA (Social Services to Adults) program.
- \$149,170 for two full-time positions (attorney and legal assistant) in the Montgomery County Office of the State's Attorney, to prosecute elder abuse cases.
- \$10,000 for the County Public Information Office, for Senior Communications.
- \$153,180 to increase the Adult Foster Care subsidy.
- \$50,000 for Respite Care for Seniors and \$50,000 for People with Disabilities.
- \$91,705 to make cold box lunches available at two additional sites (Charter House and Rebecca House) during winter months, and to increase availability at existing sites from 2 to 3 days per week.
- \$48,010 to expand the Caregiver Support Coordinator position from part-time to full-time.

**For her more general AAA report, Dr. Brunetto also shared the following updates:**

- AERS program. Two vacant HHS positions have been reclassified as nurses and the County has been allowed to recruit.
- MDOA grant application. Montgomery and Prince Georges counties have submitted a joint application for a three-year grant for caregiver training and support. The project includes a dementia training component in collaboration with the Alzheimer's Association.
- Dementia Friendly Montgomery Initiative held its second organizational meeting, and workgroups are being formed.
- Long Term Care Ombudsman Program vacancy has been filled by an individual who has both law and social work degrees and will start on August 1, 2016.
- Council Bill 19-16, Strategic Plan to End Food Insecurity, introduced by Roger Berliner. The goal of this bill is to reduce food insecurity in the County by 10% every year. There will be a hearing on June 14th at 1:30pm. (Phil Smakula noted that senior center staff are seeing more and more participants with food needs.)
- Advocacy by Boards, Committees and Commissions. The Council approved legislation that will permit an additional 18 boards, committees and commissions to engage in legislative and other policy advocacy at the state and federal levels. (The CoA already has such authority.)
- CoA orientation for new Commissioners was conducted on May 6, 2016.

### **Legislative Update - Rudy Oswald**

Rudy expanded on Odile's legislative report, as follows:

- Residential Real Property Tax Deferral–Senior Citizens. The CoA supported Expedited Bill 10-16, to provide a residential property tax deferral for residents 65 years and older with a gross income of \$80,000 or less. The bill passed.

- Additional funding for the States Attorney's office. Debbie Feinstein from the Office of the State's Attorney attended the May PPC meeting. She described the need for additional staff to investigate and prosecute adult abuse cases, explaining that the office received 420 new adult abuse complaints last year, but could only investigate 10% of those complaints. Following Ms. Feinstein's presentation, the CoA sent letters to each Councilmember, requesting support for the Public Safety's Committee's reconciliation proposal to add \$149,170 to the Executive's budget for the Office of the State's Attorney. These funds would be used to hire a Senior Legal Assistant and an Assistant State's Attorney in the Crimes Against Seniors and Vulnerable Adults Unit. As Odile noted in her report, the proposal was successful.
- Transportation Services Improvement Fund. The COA sent a follow-up letter to Council President Floreen in support of the Transportation Services Improvement Fund established by Bill 33-15. Funds from the \$0.25 surcharge per trip provided by Transportation Network Companies such as Uber and Lyft should soon be available for distribution according to guidelines set forth Bill 33-15. The moneys derived from the surcharge are for the primary purpose of subsidizing accessible vehicle transportation for the benefit of people with disabilities and senior citizens.
- The CoA sent a letter to Governor Hogan urging him to sign HB 445 and SB 758, which would increase the minimum SNAP benefit from \$16/month to \$30/month for seniors 62 and older. The letter described how more than 18,000 Maryland seniors face difficulty purchasing healthy food with limited resources. For low-income seniors, this is a particularly daunting tasks, as many seniors struggle to afford food, medicine or both.
- The CoA wrote to Senator Mikulski urging her to support reauthorization of the Older Americans Act. (The OAA was reauthorized.)

Rudy also noted the success of a recent PPC meeting with Linda McMillan, Senior Legislative Analyst with the Montgomery County Council.

### **MC Age-Friendly Strategic Plan Workgroup Update – Judith Levy**

Judy Levy described the Montgomery County Age-Friendly Strategic Plan Workgroup, which was established prior to the 2015 Summit on Aging. The Workgroup developed a path forward to develop a 3-year strategic plan at the direction of the County Executive. The path forward was approved by the Senior Subcabinet. Part of the path forward was the establishment of an Age-Friendly Montgomery Advisory Group (which would include representatives from public and private partners in addition to MC government representatives) and Age-Friendly Montgomery Workgroups (formerly the Senior Subcabinet and the Senior Subcabinet Workgroups). Each of the workgroups will be tasked with identifying priorities, goals, tasks, and associated performance measures in their area for incorporation into a 3-year Strategic Plan. While the Summit on Aging Strategic Plan Workgroup is now disbanded, its members remain active. (See Minutes from March 2016 for further discussion of the Senior Agenda and Strategic Plan.)

The Senior Subcabinet will meet on June 1, 2016 at the Rockville Library, to begin work on these next steps. Meetings are open to the public.

## **Annual Meeting (September) Planning Update–Tammy Duell**

Tammy joined the meeting by phone to discuss the Annual meeting. The meeting will take place on September 22, 2016 from 10:00-3:00pm at the Rockville Library, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor conference room. The focus will be Age-Friendly Montgomery County, with guest speakers County Executive Ike Leggett and Senior Subcabinet co-chairs Uma Ahluwalia and Gabriel Albornoz. Additional input will come from speakers Mario Wawrzusin, Director of Adult Protective Services; Shawn Brennan, Transportation & Mobility Coordinator; Pazit Aviv, Village Coordinator; Lylie Fisher, Caregiver Support Coordinator; and Tina Purser-Langley, Senior Health & Wellness Coordinator. Following a working lunch, there will be discussion of the Summer Study and Committee Structure activity and budget and policy priorities.

## **Stakeholder Meeting – Noelle Heyman**

This meeting, scheduled for October, will focus on age friendly issues including diversity and inclusion.

*Update: In June, recognizing the substantial CoA related commitments by its members, the Executive Committee voted to postpone the Stakeholder meeting until Spring 2017.*

## **Dental Care Summer Study and COA Committee Structure Taskforce – Isabelle Schoenfeld**

The Executive Committee approved two summer 2016 activities. They include:

- Summer Study on Dental Care for Low-Income Seniors, convened by the H&W committee and co-chaired by Tammy Duell and Mary Petrizzo.
- Taskforce to review and possibly revise the CoA committee structure to be sure that the structure provides coverage of topic areas to be addressed by Age Friendly Montgomery, co-chaired by Stephanie Edelstein and Isabelle Schoenfeld.

Further information on these activities, including meeting dates, will follow.

## **Liaison Updates**

- **Commission on Veterans Affairs** – Jim Campbell announced that the new Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) will be located at 15180 Gaither Road, Gaithersburg. The Clinic will provide basic medical and preventative care, health and education services, various medical screenings, and mental health services, to eligible veterans. Secretary of Aging Rona Kramer will be the speaker at the Commission's July meeting.
- **Commission on Health** – Alan Kaplan stated that the Commission on Health appreciates the opportunity to collaborate with and support the CoA on issues of mutual interest.
- **Department of Transportation** – Faisal Khan followed up on the report on expansion of the Call N Ride program to residents aged 65 and older. He reported that funding from the "Uber surcharge" is beginning to flow. He also said that the Ride-On program currently allowing seniors to ride free between 10am and 3pm on weekdays, will be extended to Saturdays.

- **Department of Recreation** – Phil Smakula reported on two very successful events attended by hundreds of seniors: (1) the May 25, 2016 National Senior Fitness Day event at White Oak Senior Center; and (2) the May 11, 2016 senior tech fair at Holiday Park. Phil announced that on June 14, the County will host its 6th annual World Elder Abuse Day (WEAD) Senior Safety forum from 10:00 am until 1:00 pm at Holiday Park Senior Center. The purpose of the forum is to educate the community, including older adults, family members, and professionals about elder abuse, including warning signs and resources. This year's theme is the safe use of technology. Phil also reported that the North Potomac Community Recreation Center, 13850 Travilah Road, Rockville, is 93% complete. The center will include a gymnasium, exercise room, social hall, kitchen, senior/community lounge, arts/kiln room, game room, vending space, conference rooms, and offices.

### **CoA Alumni Group - Charles Kauffman**

Charles reported that the Alumni Group is moving forward with its update of the Chinese American Senior Services Association (CASSA) resource guide.

### **Other business**

Karen Maricheau attended Secretary of Aging Rona Kramer's Town Hall meeting on the draft Maryland State Plan on Aging. The State Plan, which reflects federal expectations and state priorities, outlines the following five goals for MDOA between FY2017-FY2020:

**Goal 1:** *Advocate to ensure the rights of older adults and their families and prevent their abuse, neglect, and exploitation.*

**Goal 2:** *Support and encourage older adults, individuals with disabilities, and their loved ones to easily access and make informed choices about services that support them in their home or community.*

**Goal 3:** *Create opportunities for older adults and their families to lead active and healthy lives.*

**Goal 4:** *Finance and coordinate high quality service that support individuals with long term needs in a home or community setting.*

**Goal 5:** *Lead efforts to strengthen service delivery and capacity by engaging community partners to increase and leverage resources.*

The draft plan is available at <http://aging.maryland.gov/Documents/AgingStatePlan.pdf>.

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 pm

Respectfully Submitted  
Stephanie Edelstein, Secretary